

Dear Commissioners:

Stop hidden phone fees so I can truly compare prices of phone services. I support the petition filed by the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates and endorsed by other consumer advocacy organizations. CG Docket No. 04-208, Petition for Declaratory Ruling Regarding Truth-In-Billing and Billing Format, is long overdue.

Phone bills should be truthful and easy to understand. My phone bill has been 12 pages long, with information that could be organized in fewer pages that would be easier to read. It seems that the reason for all of this confusion is so that any discrepancy will be difficult to find and the average customer won't want to take the time to go through the mess. Also, the tax descriptions are so vague that there is no way of knowing if they are real or made up by the phone company... or a mixture of both. When I asked a Customer Service Rep yesterday about one particular tax, he told me that he had no idea what it was for! I want to see descriptions for all taxes that I am billed for, including the name of governmental institution that it is for, so that we can have the opportunity to check them out for credibility.

Because this practice is tolerated by the FCC, long distance and wireless phone companies are able to hide the true cost of service. These add-ons make the advertised price of service significantly less than the amount of the check I have to write each month to pay the bill. Competition will not work if consumers cannot accurately compare prices when shopping for service.

Many states are stepping up to address this problem. They should be allowed to proceed. However, the FCC shouldn't shirk its responsibility, nor limit states from doing more.

The FCC should immediately grant the NASUCA petition to investigate billing practices, and prohibit phone and wireless companies from imposing separate monthly fees, line items or surcharges unless expressly mandated by law or the charge is expressly authorized by a governmental authority.